



Regina Walsh
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CONNECTICUT SOCIETY OF ACUPUNCTURE AND ORIENTAL MEDICINE
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~~SB 392~~

March 8th, 2010

Senator Joseph Crisco
Representative Steve Fontana
Co-Chairs, Insurance & Real Estate Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SB 392 – AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS PROVIDED BY CHIROPRACTORS

Dear Senator Crisco and Representative Fontana,

The Connecticut Society of Acupuncture and Oriental medicine (CSAOM) is a non-profit, professional organization. CSAOM is contributing to the evolution of the profession, supporting practitioners in clinical practice, promoting excellence in professional standards and ethics and educating the public on many benefits of AOM. CSAOM has been working with the Department of Public Health and the Public Health Committee in recent years to update the Connecticut Acupuncture practice law. In the 2009 session, we obtained unanimous passage of Public Act 09-21, a title protection to Connecticut's licensed acupuncturists.

CSAOM respectfully requests that the Insurance & Real Estate Committee **not support SB 392** (*An Act Concerning Insurance Coverage For Acupuncture Treatments Provided by Chiropractors and the Minimum Professional Liability Insurance Carried by Chiropractors*)

CSAOM acknowledges the Chiropractic scope of practice includes acupuncture. However, it does not include any minimum standard of training and examination.

Passage of SB 392 would continue to create confusion as to which profession has the standards of education and credentials established in practice law. Under this bill, Chiropractors would be permitted to bill insurance companies for services performed even if the practitioner received little or no training in the procedures. Even for those who did receive training, the training is inconsistent because there are no minimum standards in the Chiropractic practice law.

In comparison, the present education standard for Licensed Acupuncturists is the Masters degree requiring approximately 1,300 hours of specialized training in Chinese Medical theory, diagnosis, treatment approaches, point location, needling techniques, and numerous related modalities. All licensed acupuncturists are required to pass a rigorous two-day national exam (NCCAOM) and meet ongoing continuing education standards.

At this time, there is no mandated insurance coverage of acupuncture services provided by Connecticut state Licensed Acupuncturists.

All the Connecticut health professions care about the quality of services provided to our patients. CSAOM believes that the standard of care provided to acupuncture patients should be based on established minimum standards of education and examination. Since there is no insurance parity for Licensed Acupuncturists, patients may be more likely to choose care provided by limited or untrained professionals. That is not acceptable standard of care.

In addition to opposing SB 392, we urge the Committee to talk to the Public Health Committee regarding any future bills regarding insurance coverage for acupuncture, as the quality of acupuncture care is a much larger issue than only insurance.

Thank you for your commitment to your work and the state of Connecticut

Respectfully,

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KNOW YOUR ACUPUNCTURIST

Certified Acupuncturist Physician Acupuncturist Other Acupuncturist	Licensed Acupuncturist
<p>Physicians, chiropractors, naturopaths, podiatrists, physical therapists, and dentists, (sometimes listed as Certified Acupuncturists generally have 72 to 300 hours of training in acupuncture and are not required to have a license in acupuncture to practice in Ct.</p>	<p>Licensed Acupuncturists (L.Ac.) have an average of 2,500 hours of training in eastern medicine, the cornerstone of acupuncture training. Schools now graduate students at Master's Degree level</p>
<p>Training which is often comprised of home study, video tape lecture and /or in a few cases, weekend courses.</p>	<p>Degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine granted by schools accredited by the Dept. of Education. On site education with extensive didactic study in eastern medicine and a secondary focus on western medicine disease process.</p>
<p>Minimal clinical experience in acupuncture or, no actual patient treatments before certification.</p>	<p>Upwards of 700 to 900 hours of clinical experience and up to 250 actual patient treatments performed before graduation and licensure.</p>
<p>Not required to take the National Certification examination to prove competency in acupuncture.</p>	<p>Required to pass the National Certification examination to prove proficiency and competency in acupuncture and oriental medicine (NCCAOM). Also required to pass Clean Needle Technique examination.</p>
<p>Not required to regularly complete continuing education course</p>	<p>Required to do regular continuing education to maintain national certification with NCCAOM.</p>

At the present time, Connecticut does not require any training or examination process in the practice of acupuncture and oriental medicine by MD's, chiropractors, naturopaths, physical therapists, or dentists. While these practitioners hold a license in their own field, it does not mean that they hold a license in acupuncture. The resulting confusion sometime leaves people unsure of the qualification of the person offering acupuncture services. Specifically ask the practitioner if they are a Licensed Acupuncturist.

Always "Request the Best". Have your acupuncture care performed by a
LICENSED ACUPUNCTURIST.